

ROBUST SYSTEM FOR SCREENING MAIL FOR BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 Items of mail are rapidly processed in a mail sampling system to determine if
the mail is contaminated with a chemical or biological agent. The mail sampling
system maintains a negative pressure in a containment chamber and includes a
triggering sampler that makes a threshold determination regarding possible
contamination, and a detecting sampler that obtains a sample for more detailed
analysis in response to a signal from the triggering sampler. A sample of particulates
10 collected from an item of mail is either removed for analysis or analyzed in the
system to identify a contaminating agent. Optionally, the system includes an
archiving sampler, which archives samples for subsequent processing and analysis,
and a decontamination system, which is activated to decontaminate the mail if
needed.